

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE – 6 March 2020**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
1.	Cllr Sharp – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Transport and Infrastructure	Transport and Infrastructure Committee	Agenda Item 6 WISBECH RAIL PROGRESS REPORT The report suggests that National Rail seems the best option in terms of Value for Money but appears to have one major weakness compared to the light rail option, namely the lack of a station at the Garden Village. What compromise can be achieved to avoid thousands of short journeys, which would have a knock-on effect on the Town Centre station? Ely North Area Capacity Enhancement.
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
		Cllr Sharp – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Transport	It is the ambition of the Combined Authority to enable Wisbech and the north Cambridgeshire area to have equal access to opportunities within Cambridgeshire and promote inward investment. It is intended that the Wisbech Rail project will significantly contribute to the sustainable growth of Wisbech. Alongside the development of Wisbech Rail the project team will liaise closely with the bus reform task force to consider services within Wisbech and serving the station. As the Wisbech Garden Town further develops additional rail links and services may become a consideration.
No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
2.	Cllr Sharp – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Transport and	Transport and Infrastructure Committee	Agenda Item 11 ELY NORTH AREA CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT

	Infrastructure		The report mentions that the £200m approved by DfT was for Control Period 6 ending in 2024. The report mentions potential cost increases for the project but is that funding in jeopardy if the scheme is not delivered within that time. The report on Wisbech Rail mentions 2038 for through trains, so is that the likely timeline for completion? Ely North is the key to getting container freight off the A14 and contribute to reducing our carbon footprint.
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
		Cllr Sharp – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Transport	<p>As with all options resulting from a Strategic Outline Business Case, all funding is subject to change according to stage development and resulting options. The additional £200m challenge for delivery within Control Period 6, will equally be subject to options that are deliverable, feasible and affordable.</p> <p>As alluded to in the question, the challenges at Ely are complex, but any solutions would indeed contribute greatly to the decarbonisation agenda, by potentially removing container freight from Heavy Goods Vehicles currently traversing our region, notably the A14 corridor.</p> <p>Additional passenger train paths per hour are equally important to our region and the wider network, and it is our intention to secure as many of these paths as possible, at the earliest opportunity, to extend the Wisbech Rail from March with a continuous route to Cambridge, but also to enable additional stopping services at Whittlesea, March and Manea.</p>

SKILLS COMMITTEE – 9 March 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
1.	Cllr Coles – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Skills	Skills Committee	<p>Agenda Item 2.2. ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET COMMISSIONING STRATEGY 2020-25 AND REDISTRIBUTION SYSTEM</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the desire of the budgeting strategy</p>

			<p>to focus adult education budget on geographic areas of deprivation with the greater number of learners likely to benefit from funded courses which will improve their skills and job opportunities.</p> <p>This will concentrate resources on Fenland and Peterborough as areas of particular need and includes East Cambridgeshire as an area potentially requiring some additional support for learners.</p> <p>There has at the same time been a significant reduction in funded providers from 196 to 17 and a focus on skills for employment and particularly concentrating on employed learners on low incomes, learners with no or few qualifications, older unemployed people and others with particular problems in obtaining a job due to disability, joblessness or other life challenges.</p> <p>How can the skills committee ensure deprived learners in other areas of Cambridgeshire are not discriminated against because of these structural decisions - where fewer providers are concentrating on a subset of potential learners just in priority areas within the Combined Authority?</p>
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Cllr John Holdich – Chairman of Skills the Committee	Cllr Coles – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Skills	<p>The devolution of the Adult Education Budget provides an opportunity to reflect local circumstances and in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough with the three sub economies in one and the known differences in educational attainment and median pay scales as evidenced in the CPIER. To ensure the Adult Education Budget assists in reducing this polarisation the changes are seeking to incentivise more impactful participation in Peterborough and Fenland. There remains a substantial funding allocation in Cambridgeshire, with Cambridgeshire Regional College, Cambridgeshire County Council and other local providers receiving more than half of the CPCA £11.53m AEB allocation; we don't envisage that significantly changing. To alleviate any discriminatory concerns, we will include super output areas in Cambridgeshire that are on par with Peterborough and Fenland in any funding changes.</p>
	Question from:	Question to:	Question

2.	Cllr Coles – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Skills	Skills Committee	<p>Page 8 item 17.1. of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Adult Education Budget Commissioning Strategy 2020-2025: A Framework for Partnership: Working together to ensure a world class offer for adult education.</p> <p>The framework document recognises that the demand for skills provision outstrips the resources available in order to focus on skills for work and improved employment prospects. Other more social learning opportunities that provide companionship, mutual support and entertainment would seem to be excluded from the funding programme. How can this gap be addressed so that valuable courses that don't meet a geographic priority or a skills and employment focus can continue to be provided and these learners can continue to participate in lifelong learning?</p>
	Response From:	Response to:	Response
	Cllr John Holdich – Chairman of Skills the Committee	Cllr Coles – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Skills	<p>We have given a commitment to at least maintain the community learning funding allocation and expenditure in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough from previous years. We are conscious that AEB is often the only source of funding for most, if not all, social learning activity within local communities. We want to target this activity with a greater expectation of progression for more learners be that into education or employment and to focus on increased social confidence and wellbeing for the low skilled and low paid.</p>

HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 9 March 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
1.	Cllr Murphy – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Housing and Communities Committee	Do we have any more information or find out about plans that Homes England may have and how they may be moving to proactively fund accessible homes and homes that tackle climate change?

	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Cllr Chris Boden – Chairman of Housing and Communities Committee	Cllr Murphy – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	<p>There is work with the Department of Health and Social Care to allocate up to £125 million additional funding to 2020/21 through the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund. This will be used to develop new affordable homes, which meet the needs of older people and disabled adults.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of housing authorities to understand housing needs to provide and ensure that housing is provided. Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) is the way forward in providing energy efficient housing. Building Control within housing authorities will need to ensure insulation in new units is provided. However, newer homes are built with this in mind, as they tend to be energy efficient and some are now moving to providing electricity with the loss of gas within the next decade. The need to work towards carbon zero homes has become more evident. <i>The Combined Authority is committed to meet with Homes England and pose these questions and the responses reported will be reported to this Committee.</i></p> <p>Homes England have provided an initial response that they must embrace change to improve productivity and reduce the impact of the declining workforce. MMC has the potential to be significantly more productive than traditional methods and greatly increase the pace of delivery. MMC can also improve the quality of construction, address labour and materials shortages and deliver a number of additional benefits such as improved energy efficiency and health and safety. As a result, developers are already introducing MMC. However, the MMC industry is currently immature with limited production capacity and supply chains. It requires stimulus if it is to evolve further. Homes England will support the uptake and development of MMC through a range of interventions and incorporate MMC into their building lease disposals to demonstrate a range of MMC products on Homes England land. They will also encourage partners to use MMC through provision of development finance to developers. Homes England's Local Authority Accelerated Construction programme will also encourage more widespread use of MMC to help increase the speed of construction and build out.</p> <p>Older people can get help from another home ownership scheme called Older People's Shared Ownership if they are aged 55 or over. It works in the same way</p>

			<p>as the general Shared Ownership scheme, but they can only buy up to 75% of the home. Once they own 75% they will not have to pay rent on the remaining share. Home Ownership for People with Long-Term Disabilities (HOLD) can help people buy any home that's for sale on a Shared Ownership basis if they have a long-term disability. They can apply for HOLD if the properties available through the other home ownership schemes do not meet their needs, e.g. if they need a ground-floor property.</p>
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